

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM DASCHLE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

## RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

## SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Today, the Senate will resume debate on the Medicare prescription drug conference report. We had an extended and vigorous debate on this historic legislation yesterday. Again, it is unusual to have a Saturday session and even more unusual to have a Sunday session, but the historic level which this debate has reached demonstrates the importance of doing just that.

There are a number of Senators who will be on the Senate floor to discuss this matter during today's session, and in an effort to accommodate the number of Senators who are seeking floor time today, we would encourage Members to limit their statements to no more than 30 minutes. We hope to work out a schedule so that Members will have a better understanding of at what point in the day or the evening they will be able to speak. If we can lock in 30 minutes per Member, or possibly work out alternating hours, which we will do, hopefully, in a few minutes, we will then have an orderly way to move forward so that everybody will have an opportunity to address this important issue.

Yesterday, it became apparent that we would not be able to lock in a time certain for an up-or-down vote on this important legislation, and at least one Democratic Member said that a filibuster would be the road to pursue. Thus, I filed a cloture motion on the conference report. That vote on the motion to invoke cloture is expected to occur sometime around 12:30 on Monday. All Senators will be notified when that vote is set.

## RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I share the view expressed by the majority leader about the need for us to accommodate as many Senators as possible. It is my understanding that there is no objection to actually locking in a 30-minute time limit. Senators are free, of course, to ask unanimous consent to extend if they wish. So at this time I propound that request.

I ask unanimous consent that Senators be limited to no more than 30 minutes during the debate today.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and I do not intend to object, I just want to clarify one matter. My understanding is, and it is printed in the calendar, that there is already an order of speakers that has been established. I want to make clear that that will be recognized as we go forward today. I certainly will not object to the request of the distinguished minority leader. I just want to be clear that that will be the order of the speakers.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request?

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Reserving the right to object on the order, I was referred to by my good friend, the majority leader, last evening at about 6:15 in reference to this legislation. The time-honored tradition of this body is to notify an individual when there is going to be reference made to them. I was not notified, and I heard later last evening that I was referred to. I indicated that to the leader. I would like to be able to do this in a timely way. I was listed yesterday to be either third or fourth in order, but I am not prepared right now—if there is some other previous order that has been arranged, I want to be able to reserve my rights that have been respected in this institution for 220 years, and that is when a Senator is referred to in terms of legislation, a fair opportunity is given for them to respond.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request?

The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I hope that Senators would not ask to extend beyond half an hour because it is so difficult to object. We have a lot of people. We have 17 on this side. Multiply that by half an hour and one gets the figures. I hope everyone will stick by the half hour that will be entered into, hopefully, momentarily.

I say to my friend from Massachusetts, the way the order is now set on our side, the majority leader would speak first. I would speak second. I would be happy to change places with the Senator from Massachusetts so he can go second, and I will go sixth or seventh.

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator from Nevada, as always, is more than kind and generous. I appreciate that very much. I have no objection.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection to changing the order as the Senator from Nevada requested? Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Massachusetts will take the place of the Senator from Nevada, and the Senator from Nevada will have the place in the order of the Senator from Massachusetts.

Is there objection to the minority leader's time limit of 30 minutes per speaker?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, the list that is published in the calendar only has Democratic Senators in it. Obviously, there is an alternative list that would allow for Republican Senators to have a 30-minute block in between the Democratic Senators who speak.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Parliamentarian informs me the Senator is correct, that a Republican Senator will go after each Democratic speaker if someone is here to be recognized.

Mr. FRIST. Let me also clarify that on the Republican side we are not locked into any order. The opponents to the bill are locked into an order of speakers. Ours has been just an agreement, so we are not locked into any order, but there will be a 30-minute limit, and we will be alternating back and forth.

Mr. BUNNING. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection to the minority leader's request? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Who seeks time?

## RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

## MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG, IMPROVEMENT, AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2003—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany H.R. 1, an act to amend Title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a voluntary prescription drug benefit under the Medicare Program and to strengthen and improve the Medicare Program, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is first on the list.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I will certainly not exceed 30 minutes. I hope I can speak using less time because we are getting a little bit of a late start.

Let me begin by saying what an important debate this is. This is a debate the consequences of which will last for generations. This debate in many respects will be every bit as important as the debate on Medicare in 1965. One really has to go back to that year, 1965, to fully appreciate what we are debating now.

There was a debate, of course, in that period of our history, in the mid-1960s, about whether it was possible for us to address what was a national embarrassment at the time. About half of all senior citizens in the early 1960s had no health insurance—none. They were left out. There were horror stories about what they had to do in order to accommodate the health problems they were facing. It was a painful chapter. In